DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 169 476 CS 004 718

AUTHOR Theofield, Mary B.
TITLE Oral Reading: A Tool for Student Assessment and Teacher Training.
PUB DATE Oct 78
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College Reading Association (22nd, Washington, D.C., October 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Miscue Analysis; *Oral Reading; Reading Instruction; *Reading Research; *Student Evaluation; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Goodman (Kenneth)

ABSTRACT

This literature review considers some of the work done on oral reading as a diagnostic tool and as it relates to teacher training and attitudes toward reading. It mentions some of the ways oral reading has been used in assessment, discusses Kenneth Goodman's model of reading, considers some of the criticisms and supports of the model, and points to miscue analysis as a way of finding out about information processing. It also points to research that indicates that the theoretical orientation of teachers affects the success of reading programs and explores research done on teachers who were trained in miscue analysis. (TJ)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED169476

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ORAL READING: A TOOL FOR STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND TEACHER TRAINING

Paper presented at the 22nd Annual Meeting of the College Reading Association, Washington, D.C., October 20, 1978.

Mary B. Theofield
Secondary Learning Centers
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 881 - 1435

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mary B. Theofield

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

Prepared for the annual convention of the College Reading Association, October 20, 1978, Washington, D. C.

CS004718

Mary B. Theofield
Secondary Learning Centers
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

Oral Reading: A Tool for Student Assessment and Teacher Training

Historically, analysis of oral reading behavior has been utilized as a diagnostic tool. Because the ability of a student to verbalize that which is represented in print can be readily checked when diagnosing needs, oral reading has served as a point of departure for remedial instruction (Harris, 1961; Strang, et al, 1955).

The proclivity to use oral reading as an assessment technique is based on the assumption that the oral reading process closely parallels the silent one. Swanson (cited in Weber, 1968), while acknowledging that the mechanics of silent reading differ from those of oral reading, found that the ability of adults to perceive accurately words read from a tachistoscope correlated highly with

errors made by subjects when they orally deciphered a paragraph. He also found a low positive correlation between oral reading errors and silent and oral reading comprehension. While Swanson is representative of those investigators who have tried to substantiate the parallel nature of the two reading modes, research has yet to present definitive evidence that, in deriving meaning from print, both oral and silent reading summon the same processes (Weber, 1968). Rather, the research has focused on correlations, as Weber (1968) points out, "between aspects of the over-all product of the task" (p. 100).

Classification Systems

Because the analysis of errors made by a student reading orally has been frequently used in assessment, a number of methods have been developed for systematically organizing the information this technique yields. In summarizing these systems, Weber (1968) notes that they vary in the observed behaviors, designated categories, and criteria for classification of errors. The major similarity among the systems is their theoretical view toward analysis of oral reading. All treat reading errors "as though they resulted simply from inaccurate perception of the written words" (p. 102). Credence is not given to the linguistic function of the word or the meaning relationship between the error and the remainder of the sentence.

The classification system of Kenneth Goodman (1969) reflects

current linguistic and psycholinguistic thought. Deploring negative and haphazard approaches which he considers to have characterized analysis of oral reading errors in the past (Goodman & Burke, 1973), Goodman's taxonomy was developed through an extensive Office of Education research project in the late 1960s (Goodman & Burke, 1973). While other systems assume that variances indicate a reader's inaccurately discerning written words, Goodman's taxonomy is based on the assumption that an oral reader's deviations from that which appears on the printed page, or miscues as Goodman calls them, indicate a reader's processing of information (Burke & Goodman, 1970; Goodman, 1976b; Goodman & Burke, 1969, 1973). This processing of information, which reflects itself in the product of oral reading, is presented in Goodman's model of reading.

The Goodman Model of Reading

The model is built on Goodman's definition of reading as "the active reconstruction of a message from written language" (Goodman, 1965, p. 639). As a prolific writer, he has described the model in slightly varying forms and formats but basically each presentation has contained certain key elements. A concise and composite description of the model appears in the proceedings of the 1970 Claremont Reading Conference:

> Reading printed words then is a spiral of predict, sample, select, guess and confirm activities . . . /using/ the least amount of

> information to make the best possible first guesses . . . /and asking/ whether (a) they produce language structures as /the reader/ knows them and (b) they make sense (Goodman, 1970, p. 128).

In the Goodman model of reading the proficient reader has available three major cueing systems to use when trying to reconstruct a writer's meaning. Rousch (1976) describes them as follows:

> (a) The graphophonic system--the shapes of print and the relationships between these shapes and various sounds.
>
> (b) The syntactic system--a reader's feel for the way language flows.
>
> (c) The semantic system--a reader's knowledge of the story line or topic being read about and the ability to cumulatively build up and monitor a meaningful and coherent representation of the story or topic as it unfolds (pp. 1-2).

It should be acknowledged that Goodman does not see the model as linear, but views the processing of graphic, syntactic, and semantic information as occurring simultaneously (Goodman, 1976c; Goodman & Burke, 1969, 1973).

Miscues as Representative of Process

As noted, Goodman views oral reading as a product of the reading process in action. The assumption is thus made that oral reading and silent reading are variations of the same process (Goodman & Goodman, 1977). Goodman says that in oral reading the reader decodes to meaning and then encodes to oral language. The silent reading model utilizes only the first half of the process (Goodman & Burke, 1969). Completion of the entire process allows one to use oral reading as a "window" through which to observe the silent reading process (Goodman, 1976b; Goodman & Goodman, 1977). Because of Goodman's belief that the term error "has a negative connotation" (Goodman & Goodman, 1977, p. 317), miscue has been defined as "an actual observed response in oral reading which does not match the expected response" (Goodman, 1976b, p.5). The insights into reading through the window of miscue analysis led to Goodman's very comprehensive system for coding miscues based on a taxonomy of categories (Goodman & Burke, 1973). Inherent in the taxonomy are two additional assumptions:

(1) Miscues are not random but are systematic information-processing strategies (Burke & Goodman, 1970; Goodman, 1976b; Goodman & Burke, 1969, 1973). "A key assumption in the research has been that these miscues are

generated by the reader in the same way that expected responses are and with use of the same information" (Goodman & Burke, 1969, p. 4).

(2) Because miscues differ in their effect on the reading process, not all miscues are undesirable (Burke & Goodman, 1970; Goodman & Burke, 1973). "In a real sense, then, a goal of reading instruction is not to eliminate miscues but to help readers produce the kind of miscues that characterize proficient reading" (Goodman & Goodman, 1977, p. 320).

Goodman feels that miscue analysis "involves its user in examining the observed behavior of oral reading . . . as a process of constructive meaning from a graphic display" (Goodman, 1976b., p. 4). Because "the miscues that a reader makes may reflect his inference of the deep structures with which he momentarily thinks he is dealing" (Goodman & Burke, 1969, p. 2), Goodman states that "miscue research has led us away from a word focus to a comprehension focus" (Goodman, 1976b, p.8).

Opinions and Comments on the Goodman View of Reading

Goodman has recently been challenged by Peter Mosenthal on several points. These points include the narrow view of reading that miscues provide and the emphasis, in Mosenthal's opinion, on linguistic variables (i.e., the three cueing systems) rather than

on comprehension. Mosenthal's definition of reading includes a consideration of the purpose for reading and the cognitive processes upon which linguistic processing is built in addition to the fundamental linguistic units (Mosenthal 1976). He therefore sees Goodman's model as emphasizing too heavily the grammatical aspect of a passage (Mosenthal, 1976-77).

Athey (1971) has responded to Goodman's model more positively than Mosenthal. She says that Goodman's model is important because it emphasizes extracting meaning from the printed page. Athey also draws a distinction between Goodman's view of reading and models which emphasize phonics. She says that the psycholoinguistic guessing game of reading seems akin to divergent thinking, which is felt by some to be a factor in creativity. Learning to read by identifying words and letters, as most children do, is similar to convergent thinking.

The two reading models suggested by Athey represent opposing theoretical orientations to teaching reading. If the assumption can be made that one's theory, or philosophy, of reading is reflected in instructional decision-making, then perhaps the value of oral reading analysis, as representative of a whole language model of reading, lies in teacher consciousness-raising which wil lead to decision-making for instruction.

Theoretical Orientation to Reading

Limited research, however, has investigated the effect that teachers' orientation to reading has on what occurs within the classroom. Barr (1974-75) says that some evidence has pointed to the direct effect that instructional method has on children's reading ability but that these have been broad studies which tied method to overall reading achievement. Two studies which have limited their parameters to oral reading ability in relation to method have been done by Barr (1974-75) and Cohen (1974-75). Barr found that the reading strategy utilized by children in identifying words in a list reflected the particular method by which they were instructed. According to research by Cohen, the variances from the text made by students instructed by a phonics method tended to be nonsense word substitutions for grapho-phonetically similar words.

Findings by Harste (1976) suggest that the theoretical orientation of the reading teacher is the prime variable in a successful reading program. Although the paradigm for observing the relationship between various orientations that was developed by Harste & Burke (1977) shows the orientations as operating on a continuum, three distinct models have been identified along this continuum. One of these is referred to as a decoding model, one a skills model, and the third as a whole language or language

based model. In an exploratory study (Harste, 1977) in one elementary school, data were obtained from 19 staff personnel and 54 selected students. Teachers were asked to rank order students on reading ability, complete a survey of their beliefs about reading, and classify pupils as to reading ability on the basis of reading behaviors indicated on Pupil Task Cards, cards which contained isolated samples of miscues. The oral reading of students was analyzed according to the Reading Miscue Inventory. Both teachers and students were found to operate consistently out of their particular orientation to reading. Because this study was intended to be exploratory, no claims were made as to the generalizability of the findings; nevertheless, Harste does report that data collected show "a direct and identifiable relationship between reading instruction and reading performance" (p. 20), and that "not only are teacher . . . planning decisions consistent theoretically; but further, such teacher planning behaviors match and predict teacher in-class or tutorial behaviors" (p. 13).

Recent research seems to indicate that a dichotomy exists between the theoretical orientation of classroom teachers and current reading research. Taylor, et al (1978) found that, while 41 university professors favored a view of reading which would be consistent with what Harste calls the whole language orientation,

34 teachers were divided in their opinions about statements which reflected this orientation. In addition, while Harste's study was limited to nine classrooms, a whole language view of reading was not held by teacher or paraprofessional staff in any of these.

A recent study (Jongsma, 1978), viewed by the author as a pilot study, investigated whether training in miscue analysis would indeed influence teachers' attitudes toward oral reading miscues with the result that teachers would then be more aware of students' strengths after this training. A group of 23 graduate students, with at least 2 years of teaching experience and with at least one previous graduate reading course, took part in the study. The training basically involved the use of the Reading Miscue Inventory (Goodman and Burke, 1972) for a period of approximately 4 weeks. A schema was devised to classify and analyze the comments made by each subject to the pre and post assessment measures. These pre and post assessment measures involved listening to a sample of a student reading orally and replying to several comprehension questions. The conclusions reached were described by the author as "tentative" (p. 89) and focused on the following two points:

(1) Teachers who have been trained in miscue analysis tend to focus on a reader's strength, and

(2) Teachers trained in miscue analysis seem to

be more "analytic perceivers of all reading behavior" (p. 89).

The author concludes by noting that much more research is needed before conclusions other than these tentative ones can be reached.

Despite the lack of definitive findings, however, the examples cited clearly show the existence of both current interest and current need for further research into the relationship of the teacher's theoretical view of reading to classroom decision-making. It is possible that the study of oral reading behavior can provide the vehicle for investigating this relationship, if training and analyzing oral reading variances does, in fact, give teachers insight into reading process while the transfer of the coding onto a summary sheet provides a qualitative method for assessing student reading ability. The awareness of both the structure of the English language and the reading process that are subtly evoked as teachers work through the procedures involved would seem to be a major contribution of training in oral reading analyses. It is possible that teacher decision-making can be enhanced as the teacher gains insight into the reading process.

REFERENCES

Athey, I. J. Language models and reading. Reading Research Quarterly, Fall 1971, 7, 16-102.

Barr, R. The effect of instruction on pupil reading strategies. Reading Research Quarterly, 1974-75, 10, 555-582.

Burke, C. L., & Goodman, K. S. When a child reads: A psycho-linguistic analysis. Elementary English, Jan. 1970, 47, 121-129.

Cohen, A. S. Oral reading errors of first grade children taught by a code emphasis approach. Reading Research Quarterly, 1974-75, 10, 616-650.

Davey, B., & Taylor, N. Oral Reading Behavior (ORB): A System for Analysis (Revised Ed.). University of Maryland: Reading Center, 1978.

Goodman, K. S. A linguistic study of cues and miscues in reading. Elementary English, October 1965, 42, 639-643.

Goodman, K. S. Analysis of oral reading miscues: Applied psycholinguistics. Reading Research Quarterly, 1969, 5, 9-30.

Goodman, K. S. Comprehension-centered reading. In M.P. Douglass (Ed.), Claremont Reading Conference, 34th Yearbook. Claremont, Calif.: Claremont Reading Conference, 1970.

Goodman, K. S. Behind the eye: What happens in reading. In H. Singer & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976. (a)

Goodman, K. S. Miscues: Windows on the reading process. In K. S. Goodman (Ed.), Miscue Analysis: Applications to Reading Instruction. Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976. (b)

Goodman, K. S. Reading: A psycholinguistic guessing game. In H. Singer & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Assoc., 1976. (c)

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. L. A Study of Oral Reading Miscues that Result in Grammatical Re-Transformations. (U.S.O.E. Final Report, Project No. 7-E-219) Contract No. OEG-0-I-070219-2806(010). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, June 1969. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 039 101)

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. L. Theoretically Based Studies of Patterns of Miscues in Oral Reading Performance. (U. S. O. E. Project No. 90375) Grant No. OEG-0-9-320375-4269. Washington, D.C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, March 1973 (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 079 708)

Goodman, K. S., & Goodman, Y.M. Learning about psycholinguistic process by analyzing oral reading. Harvard Educational Review, August 1977, 47, 317-333.

Goodman, Y., & Burke, C. Reading Miscue Inventory. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972.

Harris, A. J. How to Increase Reading Ability (4th Ed., Rev.). New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1961.

Harste, J. C. Teacher Behavior and Its Relationship to Pupil Performance in Reading. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Reading Assoc., Miami Beach, Florida, May 1977. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 141 750)

Harste, J. C., et al. The Teacher of Reading. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Reading Assoc., Anaheim, Calif., May 1976. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 123 552)

Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. A new hypothesis for reading teacher research: Both the teaching and learning of reading are theoretically based. In P. David Pearson (Ed.), Reading: Theory, Research and Practice. Clemson, S. Car.: National Reading Conference, Inc. 1977

Jongsma, E. A. The effect of training in miscue analysis on teacher's perceptions of oral reading behaviors. Reading World, October 1978, 18, 85-90.

Maguire, T. O. Semantic differential methodology for the structuring of attitudes. American Educational Research Journal, Fall 1973, 10, 295-306.

Mosenthal, P. Simons' Lament or a "New and Improved" Psycholinguistic Comprehension Model Applied to an "Old and Over Used" Assumption of Reading Methodology. Paper presented at meeting of the International Reading Assoc., Anaheim, Calif., May 1976. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 126 473)

Mosenthal, P. Psycholinguistic properties of aural and visual comprehension as determined by children's abilities to comprehend syllogisms. Reading Research Quarterly, 1976-77, 12, 55-92.

Osgood, C. E. Studies on the generality of affective meaning systems. American Psychologist, 1962, 17, 10-28.

Pikulski, J. A critical review: Informal reading inventories. The Reading Teacher, Nov. 1974, 28, 141-151.

Rousch, P. D. Reading in Different Kinds of Australian Children. Paper presented at the meeting of the International Reading Assoc., Miami Beach, May 1977.

Strang, R., McCullough, C. M., & Traxler, A. E. Problems in the Improvement of Reading (2nd Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1955.

Taylor, N., Pickert, S., & Chase, M. Views on Reading and Language: A Comparison of the Opinions of University Reading Faculty, Classroom Teachers and Parents. Paper presented at the meeting of American Educational Research Assoc., Toronto, March 1978.

Weber, R. M. The study of oral reading errors: A survey of the literature. Reading Research Quarterly, Fall 1968, 4, 96-119.